

# Zion's Herald and Wesleyan Journal.

PUBLISHED BY THE BOSTON WESLEYAN ASSOCIATION, FOR THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCES OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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For Zion's Herald.

**LUCIAN, THE VOLTAIRE OF HEATHENISM.** That the gospel is the power of God, is best seen in the obstacles it has overcome. Against it have been arrayed the keenest intellects, the ablest learning, the most unbounded wealth and power—the whole force of the current of corrupt nature. At times it has seemed as though the gospel must yield to the force opposed, and become extinct; and such would have been the case, had it been only a human institution, weak, and subject to decay; but the inherent divinity of the scheme secured an easy triumph over all its foes. The enemies of the cross, of whatever character, have always failed in their attacks, only setting forth, in their madness, more gloriously the attributes of that cross, as the symbol of divine power and grace.

These adverse influences are of two sorts: Those proceeding from the state—a brute force opposing the deep and irrepressible convictions of the human soul in its search after and obedience to God; and those of an intellectual character—a spiritual force brought to bear against the views of the Christian mind. The latter force has ever been the harder to meet and conquer. The persecuting magistrate soon grows weary in his work of violence and blood, or nature cries out against his damnable proceeding, or a conjunction of circumstances arises that compels him to desist; but the intellectual persecutor is that by whom no such restraints, is not usually subject to any such qualms of conscience, and seldom draws the sympathy of men about his victim. Men view such a proceeding as if it were the work of an intellectual swordsman is able to decapitate his antagonist, the world applauds without looking very carefully for the right.

Hence this outpouring of intellectual conflict, through which the gospel has passed has been a severe and trying one, especially when we recollect that, in every age, some of the keenest intellects have been infidels to the reigning faith. Infidels by pride of intellect, vain in the conceit of earthly wisdom, they spurn the humble spirit incarnated by the gospel, and employ the noble power by which they are endowed to demolish the glorious doctrines of the evangelical system. That they have been foiled age after age, and their counsels brought to confusion, speaks volumes in favor of the divinity of the teachings of the Sacred Volume. If the preaching of the cross is to them that perih foolishness, it is unto them that are saved the power of God and the wisdom of God; for after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

The earliest attacks on the gospel were naturally those of the scoffers, whether vulgar or polite. Those of the former class of course died with the current generation; while those of the latter frequently came embodied in the literature of the age, or their memory remained in the records of the church against which they warred—the dead by being preserved in the pot of honey he was appropriating.

The class of elegant scoffers in the first age of the church—the Voltaires of the day—are well represented by Lucian, a man of high culture, of native wit, of wealth and position in the society of his train. Such a man could not condescend to argue against the truth of the gospel. It was too low for that, or the writer was too elevated. It was deemed becoming in one of his positions only to sneer at the hated doctrines of the cross, and to hold up, on the point of his pen, the ridiculous features of the Christian life. We shall soon see what in that age was deemed low, senseless and ridiculous.

Lucian was a distinguished literary man of his age, characterized by a genius eminently satirical, a brilliancy of thought, and a larger share of humor than any other author of antiquity, with the exception, perhaps, of Aristophanes and Horace. His keen irony spares no folly and no prejudice of his contemporaries, but wages against their failings a continual warfare. His style, formed by the study of the best models, would never lead us to suspect that he was a native of the distant provinces of North Syria; it is as pure, as eloquent, as Attic, as if it had flourished in the period of classic Grecian literature, and the defects of the age merely show themselves in a desire to introduce new expressions and to divert others from their ancient and legitimate meaning.

The greater part of his productions have the dialogue for their subject; but they are not like the dialogues of Plato, disquisitions put into the mouths of interlocutors merely to destroy the monotony of the discourse. The dialogues of Lucian are true conversations; they are in every sense dramatic. He wrote largely on a variety of subjects; history, philosophy, and all the sciences. Lucian may, in fact, be regarded as the Aristophanes of his age; and like the great comic poet, he had recourse to raillery and satire to accomplish the great object he had in view. That object was to expose all kinds of delusion, fanaticism and imposture; the quackery and imposition of the priests; the folly and absurdity of the superstitious, and especially the solemn nonsense, the prating innocence and the immoral lives of the philosophical charlatans of his age. But as often happens with wits and satirists, he failed to discriminate between the precious and the vile and the elevated doctrines; the pure morals, the heroic self-sacrifice of the saints, were thrown into the crucible with the old superstitions.

The facts in regard to his life are few and contradictory. Born at Samosata, in Syria, as some think in the time of Trajan, or as others in that of Marcus Aurelius, he was destined by his father, a poor man for the profession of a sculptor, and accordingly was placed, with that view, under the instruction of his uncle. But becoming soon disgusted with the employment, he turned his attention to literature, and traveled into Asia Minor and Greece, where he delivered lectures on history. About this date, he became an adherent of Antioch, but, after some time to have relinquished this pursuit also, in order to devote himself entirely to literature. To perfect his studies in this department he again traveled in Asia, Greece, Italy and Gaul. In advanced age, he was appointed by Marcus Aurelius recorder to one of the higher tribunals in Egypt, where he soon after died.

In his extensive travels he could not fail to come in contact with the Christians who had become diffused widely through the Roman world, and he appears to have known them in the days of persecution, for in his Peregrinus he portrays, or rather caricatures the Christian martyrs. Of this work, only fragments have come down to us—mere bits of the legs and wings of the fly preserved in the honey of Patriotic literature. It is in this work that he speaks most distinctly and fully of the Christians. In these writings the teachings of the gospel are set down among the false religions, the fanaticisms, the shams of the day. The lofty devotion that peoples heaven with martyrs was regarded as a crazy and vagrant enthusiasm, altogether too low and mean to be treated in a serious and considerate spirit, as a fit subject for satire and ridicule.

Peregrinus Proteus, a real character with fictitious touches, is represented as a Cynic philosopher, devoted to the tricks of his time, who in later life became a Christian. From extreme devotion to Christ he drew upon himself the hatred of the world, was imprisoned, and from his constancy in suffering acquired among the faithful the highest consideration.

The fruits of Christian brotherly love, the spirit of forgiveness, the sense of divine favor and hope of immortality—are acknowledged by Lucian to have flowed from the Man crucified, but are strangely subjected to ridicule as part and parcel of the current fanaticism. "They still worship."

he says, "that great man who was crucified in Palestine, because it was he by whom this initiation into these mysteries was introduced into human life. These poor creatures have persuaded themselves that they are all immortal, and shall live forever. For this reason they despise death itself, and many even court it. But again their first lawgiver has persuaded them to believe that as soon as they have broken loose from the prevailing customs and denied the gods of Greece, reverencing instead of these their crucified teacher, and living after his laws, they stand to each other in the relation of brethren. They are led to despise everything alike, to consider everything else as profane, adopting those notions which have always failed in their attacks, only setting forth, in their madness, more gloriously the attributes of that cross, as the symbol of divine power and grace.

These adverse influences are of two sorts: Those proceeding from the state—a brute force opposing the deep and irrepressible convictions of the human soul in its search after and obedience to God; and those of an intellectual character—a spiritual force brought to bear against the views of the Christian mind. The latter force has ever been the harder to meet and conquer.

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If the preaching of the cross is to them that perih foolishness, it is unto them that are saved the power of God and the wisdom of God; for after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

Such were some of the scoffs of the great satirist.

A sneer is harder to meet than an argument, but Christianity was able to rise above this obstacle and those qualities which were made the subject of ridicule into universal esteem and honor, insomuch that the world-to-day fails to appreciate the wit of his satirical touches.

**S.**

**THE CLOSING SCENE.** The following is pronounced by the *Westminster Review* to be unquestionably the finest American poem ever written:

Within the sober realms of life,  
The rarer yearsinalled the dreamy air;  
Like some tame raper in his hours of sleep,  
With a quiet step, he stole into the bower bare.

The gray hairs looking from their hairy hills,  
Over the dark waters widening in the vale,  
Sent down the air a greeting to the mills,  
On the dull shudder of alternate falls.

All sights were mellowed and all sounds subdued,

And the sweetest farthings in the bower sang low,  
As the dreamy hours hushed their voices to a hush.

The embattled hosts, erewhile armed with gold,  
Their banners bright with every martial hue,  
Waited West Virginia clung so firmly to the spear,  
That she was never disengaged in life again.

All sights were mellowed and all sounds subdued,

And the sweetest farthings in the bower sang low,  
As the dreamy hours hushed their voices to a hush.

The sentinel cock upon the hillside crow—  
Crew three— and all was stiller than before;

Silent still, replying warbler blear

His alien horn, and then was heard no more.

Where erst the joy within the sun's bright bower,  
The bright bower of the golden day, was dead,

And where the orioles hung their awing nest:

Every light wind like a censer was.

As we left with no such tokens of God's presence?

Did he speak no word of invitation, of welcome,

Of course no token of his divine power?

And his hidden checks were smooth to pain and faint.

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## MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT.

FROM OUR MISSION ROOMS AT NEW YORK.

We recapitulate the Missionary Appropriations for the purposes of showing what is embraced in the *Third Class Missions*:

Foreign Missions,	\$27,657.82
Foreign Populations in this country,	15,550.00
Indian Missions,	4,350.00
AMERICAN MISSIONS,	
In fifty-eight Annual Conferences, including four German and two colored Conferences,	321,150.00

V. THE FIFTH CLASS OF MISSIONS.

1. Department of the Mississippi, including the States of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

89,000.00

2. Middle Department, including so much of the State of Tennessee as is not comprised in the Holston Conference, the State of Alabama, and Western Georgia.

72,000.00

3. Southern Department, including Florida, Eastern Georgia, and South Carolina.

40,800.00

4. Northern Department, including Eastern North Carolina, and so much of Virginia as is not included in the Baltimore Conference.

28,000.00

5. Indiana Department, including all Indiana. This Conference is not included in any Annual Conference.

30,000.00

6. For the Education of Colored Men for the Ministry.

30,000.00

7. Contingent.

31,724.17

VII. FOR THE FRIENDS METHODIST CONFERENCE, 13,600.00

VIII. CONTINGENT FUND, 25,000.00

IX. GENERAL EXPENSES, 25,000.00

X. OFFICE EXPENSES, 20,000.00

Grand Total, \$1,000,000.00

HELP TO FRIENDS.—The heart of our country has been torn asunder; France; especially has our church, felt a lively sympathy with our labors, sacrificing brethren of the French Methodist Conference. The presence of Rev. Mr. Cook as the agent of that Conference gave our General Missions Committee a strong impulse to the church, to make an expression of love by the gift of twelve thousand dollars to aid the French Conference in the prosecution of their truly missionary work. Mr. Cook has made acknowledgment of this act, and has sent the following note, received at the meeting of the Board, Nov. 15:

NEW YORK, Nov. 14, 1865.

To the Board of Managers of the Friends Society of the M. E. Church, U. S. &amp; D. Brothman: Allow me to thank you in the name of the French Methodist Conference, that the great work which you made in France yesterday, and in the correspondence of the church, to make an expression of love by the gift of twelve thousand dollars to aid the French Conference in the prosecution of their truly missionary work. Mr. Cook has made acknowledgment of this act, and has sent the following note, received at the meeting of the Board, Nov. 15:

Yours affectionately, J. P. COOK,

Secretary of the French Conference.

## COLONIZATION.

The Massachusetts Colonization Society desire to call the attention of its friends to the late change in the position and prospects of its affairs.

During the late war, slaves were not emancipated for colonization where the so called Confederacy had its seat; the few slaves in the parts of the Union who were then living, and who could not be safely moved across the country to any port of embarkation; the U. S. Government remained in its custody and with few exceptions those whom it had liberated were sent to the South, and were made slaves again.

Historical records kindly permit to attend the General Committee, I have been much interested in the debate relative to your third class of missions, and earnestly hope your resolution and efforts in that direction will be abundantly blessed of the Lord.

Yours affectionately,

J. P. COOK,

Secretary of the French Conference.

## CENTENARY OF AMERICAN METHODISM.

The Pastors in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

DEAR BRETHREN.—Consecutively Centenary Document, No. 1, containing the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is sent to the address of each of you. The Central Committee desire you to read these resolutions to your congregations on the first Sabbath of January, 1866, and fully expound them.

The General Committee, at its session in New York, Nov. 8, 1865, adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That the first Sabbath of January, 1866, be observed as a day of religious service for the express purpose of asking God's blessing upon the Centenary year.

2. That the last Sabbath of January be observed as a day of thanksgiving for the great and manifold blessings which began in 1766 in faith and hope, has grown to what we now behold. May the baptism of the Spirit, which was so plenteously poured upon them, descend also upon us. In the name of the God of our fathers let us arise and beget a new race.

3. That we at this auspicious period look for a closer union of all who hold our common Methodist faith? We have already at our meeting at Erie on the 15th of July last expressed the conviction that "with the removal of the curse, the nation is safe." We still trust that the day is not far distant when there shall be but one organization which shall embrace the whole Methodist family in the United States. We would rejoice if in our approaching Centenary there could be no further division of the church, and to this end we will labor to the uttermost and oppose to slavery. It behoves us to cultivate peace and charity toward all men; as followers of Jesus we should do all in our power to soothe the asperities of feeling excited by the war. Let us, as we are accustomed to do, be co-workers together with God.

4. It is not always given to human wisdom to accomplish its designs; yet, on the other hand, it sometimes pleases God to transcend human wisdom by the greatness of his plans, and while working with the human co-laborer, to crown his efforts with such signal honor and success. We will labor to the best of our ability to keep the history of Methodism in the century past, and such it may be in the century now before us. In this faith let us be co-workers together with God. That day may begin in the right spirit, we commend to you, brethren, the directions of the General Committee for the celebration of the second Centenary year. They contemplate the spiritual improvement of the church. We ask you, therefore, to gather together on the first Sabbath of the new year, in order to offer special thanks to God for the spiritual blessings which we so richly enjoy. But throughout the last year let prayer continually ascend for the outcome of this year, that we may be enabled to do our duty to the church, and that we may be enabled to do our duty to the world.

5. That the last Sabbath of January be observed as a day of thanksgiving for the great and manifold blessings which have been bestowed upon us. We are quite sure that the Centenary year will mark an epoch in the history of the church.

In behalf of the Committee,

W. C. HOTT, Secretary,

Office of the Central Centenary Committee, 200 Mulberry Street, New York, Nov. 24, 1865.

## GOLDEN WEDDING.

MR. EDITOR.—Permit me to give you a brief account of one of those rare and joyous occasions that took place in 1815, and continue to the labor of Rev. D. Dorchester in June, 1811, at Chichester, England.

They moved to Jenkinsville, and their houses had been a "pilgrim's bower" ever since. Theirs were simple, but most triumphant death. The gathering was indeed a good time, enlivened by speeches from Revs. S. Miller, W. E. Eaton, W. H. Park, and Cushing, singing by the children, and the worthies, a general

and a good time, a general

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